

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 129158

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P 260041Z MAY 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 129158

EXDIS

FOL RPT AMMAN 2798 ACTION SECSTATE INFO LONDON 24 MAY QUOTE

S E C R E T AMMAN 2798

EXDIS

DEPT REPEAT ATHERTON IN SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR MASS JO US UK

SUBJECT:BRITISH PROPOSAL FOR ANGLO AMERICAN DEFENSE

PACKAGE FOR JORDAN

REF: AMMAN 2797

1. SUMMARY: UK COLLEAGUE JOHN MOBERLY TELLS ME
HE HAD PROPOSED TO LONDON POSSIBLY OF ANGLO AMERICAN
AIR DEFENSE PACKAGE FOR JORDAN TO STOP DEAL WITH
SOVIETS. PROPOSAL WOULD COMBINE HAWKS AND RAPIERS
WITH NUMBERS TO BE WORKED OUT FROM SAUDI FUNDING.
FOURTEEN HAWKS AND 100 MILLION POINT RAPIER
PACKAGE WOULD COST DOLS 510 MILLION FOR FIRST

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 129158

TWO YEARS AND POSSIBLY DOLS 80 MILLION FOR FOLLOWING

TWO(US FMS MIGHT BE CONSIDERED FOR 1978-79 FOLLOW ON)
PACKAGE IS BASED ON RECOGNITION OF KINGS DISLIKE OF BRITISH
THUNDERBIRD HIGH ALTITUDE MISSILE AND BRITISH FEELING
THEY CAN GET MORE FROM SAUDI IF THEY MOVE FIRST
WITH STRONG FOLLOW UP FROM US. TALKED ALSO ABOUT
ENLISTING HELP FROM SHAH WHO CURENTLY RECEIVING
KING KHALID IN TEHRAN FOR THREE DAYS. LOCAL IRANIAN
WHO I ALSO SAW TODAY SAID HE THOUGHT SHAH WOULD
WANT TO BA HELPFUL WITH SAUDIS. UK CONCERNED
ABOUT TIMING OF ANY POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE AND
PROBABLY NEED TO GET SAUDI COMMITMENT TO IT AND
IDEA TO KING BEFORE HE GOES TO MOSCOW. I UNDERTOOK TO
REPORT IDEA TO WAHINGTON AND IF WASHINGTON
WISHED TO DISCUSS FURTHER IN LONDON ON RETURN
FOR CONSULATION MAY 26 AND 27 END SUMMARY

2. I SAW UK COLLEAGUE TODAY IN
CONNECTION WITH AIR DEFENSE QUESTION. HE TOLD ME
HE HAD SPENT WEEKEND WITH KING HUSSEIN AND DUKE
OF KENT AT AQABA. WHILE THERE HE CORNERED THE
KING ON AIR DEFENSE. HE SAID HE FELT HE HAD MADE
SOME HEADWAY TO GETTING KING TO CONSIDER CONSEQUENCES
OF GOING TO SOVIETS POSSIBLE CUT IN US AND SAUDI
BACKING BEING AMONG HIS PRINCIPAL POINTS. HE SAID
KING SEEMED TO FEEL GRATIFIED BY QUICK PRODUCTION OF A UK
OPTION BUT WAS NOT PLEASED BY INCLUSION OF THUNDERBIRD
AS AN OBSOLETE MISSILE AND RAPIER WHICH WOULD NOT COVER
MULTIPLE TARGETS NOR WOULD IT KING CLAIMS
FIT WELL IN A SYSTEM OF AIR DEFENSE.

3. MOBERLY THEN SAID THE HAS BEEN EXAMING
SOME OF THE ALTERNATIVES AND THAT ONE POSSIBILITY IS THAT
THE US AND UK COULD GET TOGETHER A NEW
OPTION WHICH WOULD BE A REAL ALTERNATIVE. HE MENTIONED
THAT KAMAL ADHAM HAD TOLD THE UK(THEIR AMBASSADOR
IN JIDDA I BELIEVE) THAT SAUDIS WOULD PAY DOLS 350
FOR A UK SYSTEM AND MIGHT EVEN BE WILLING TO ADD DOLS
50 MILLION OR EVEN DOLS 100 MILLION MORE.
MOBERLYS IDEA WAS THAT RAPIER AND HAWK SHOULD BE
COMBINED IN A NEW PROPOSAL TO THE DAUSIS FOR FUNDING.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 129158

THIS MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE TO BRING THINGS AROUND TO
WHERE THE KING WOULD HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE
SOVIETS SINCE UK WAS DEEPLY WORRIED ABOUT WAY
JORDAN WAS HEADED.

4. AT THIS POINT OUR TALK WAS INTERRUPTED BY
CALL FOR ME TO SEE KING. WHILE DETAILS REPORTED
ELSEWHERE. KING CONFIRMED FOR ME THAT HE HAD NO

INTEREST IN THUNDERBIRD, THAT RAPIER MIGHT HAVE A PLACE BUT IT WAS SECOND TO ROLAND AND CROTALE A POOR THIRD IN HIS JUDGEMENT. I DID NOT TELL HIM THAT ANY SORT OF OPTION OF THIS TYPE WAS BEING CONTEMPLATED BUT I DID ASK HIM IF RAPIER WOULD FIT IN WITH ANY OF HIS OPTIONS. HE SAID HE WAS NOT SURE BUT REPEATED THE WAS NOW COMMITTED TO SEE SOVIET OPENING THROUGH TO THE POINT WHERE HE COULD DECIDE WHETHER SOVIETS HAD ANYTHING TO OFFER. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD REPORTED THAT POINT TO WASHINGTON BUT THAT ANOTHER OPTION OF SOME SORT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR HIM TO THINK ABOUT.

5. I CONTINUED TALKS WITH MOBERLY AFTER SEEING KING AND TOLD HIM OF SOME ASPECTS OF MY TALK WITH KING I TOLD HIM UK FACED A PROBLEM WITH JORDANIAN SUSPICION ABOUT KICK BACKS IN CONNECTION WITH RAPIER THUNDERBIRD. HE SAID THAT JORDANIANS SHOULD BE GRATEFUL UK WAS ABLE TO COME UP WITH A HIGHER FIGURE FROM SAUDIS WHICH WAS DEVELOPED AFTER JORDANIANS HAD MESSED UP THE NEGOTIATIONS BADLY.

6. MOBERLY ALSO TOLD ME HE HAD PROPOSED TO LONDON AN ANGLO AMERICAN OPTION WHICH WOULD INCLUDE HAWK AND RAPIER. HE SAID THAT IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE LONDON WILL RAISE THIS WITH WASHINGTON. (EMBASSY AMMAN HAS LOOKED INTO POSSIBILITIES). A 14 HAWKS BATTERY SYSTEM WOULD COSTS ABOUT DOLS 340 MILLION FOR FIRST TWO YEARS AND RAPIER AT 100 MILLION STERLING ABOUT DOLS 170 MILLION COMPLETE. SUBSEQUENT HAWK PAYMENTS (NEXT TWO YEARS) WOULD BE DOLS 66 MILLION AND DOLS 14 MILLION RESPECTIVELY. TOTAL WOULD BE AROUND DOLS 590 MILLION OR DOLS 510

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 129158

MILLION FOR FIRST TWO YEARS) MOBERLY THOUGHT GAP WAS NOT TOO GREAT TO BRING SAUDIS ALONG. HE THOUGHT MIGHT BE BEST FOR UK TO TAKE THE LEAD IN RIYADH. WE ALSO TALKED ABOUT WHETHER A PROPOSAL MIGHT BE BROACHED THROUGH SHAH WHO IS NOW MEETING KING KHALID IN TEHRAN. HE THOUGHT THAT IDEA ALSO WORTH CONSIDERING.

7. SUBSEQUENTLY I HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE IRANIAN COLLEAGUE. (AS YOU KNOW HE HAS ALSO BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ME ABOUT TRYING TO SAVE KING FROM SOVIETS DEAL) HE TELLS ME THAT KHALID AND SHAH WILL BE MEETING FOR THREE DAYS BEGINING TODAY (MAY 24). HE ALSO SAID HE THOUGHT SOME NEW PROPOSAL TO BREAK THE DEADLOCK WAS IMPORTANT AND THAT SHAH IS GREATLY

AGGRAVATED BY JORDANIAN MOVE TOWARD SOVIETS. HE IS AWARE OF UK ORIGINAL RAPIER/THUNDERBIRD PROPOSAL AND KNEW OF KINGS REACTION TO IT (NEGATIVE) AND WONDERED WHETHER US COULD NOT DO SOMETHING MORE PERHAPS IN A COMBINATION WITH UK. I SAID IT MIGHT BE WORTH LOOKING INTO. I ASKED WHAT HE THOUGHT TEHRAN COULD DO IN LIGHT OF SHAHS LDGINGS# ON KING AND KINGS APPARENT DESIRE TO GET SOMETHING FROM SOVIETS SUCH AN ANTI AIRCRAFT GUNDS. HE SAID IRAN HAS CUT OFF ALL SOVIETS ARMS PURCHASE AS THEY ARE JUST JUNK AND WOULD NOT SUGGEST JORDAN DOING ANYTHING IN THAT AREA. SHAH MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO PERSUADE KHALID TO KICK IN DOLS 500 MILLIO OR EVEN 800 MILLION FOR TOTAL US SYSTEM NOW THAT SAUDIS HAD EVIDENCE KING WAS GOING TO SOVIETS.

8. I TOLD UK COLLEAGUE I WOULD REPORT HIS IDEA AND OUR OWN REACTION HERE WHICH IS POSITIVE. THE SAUDIS HE THOUGHT MIGHT BE MORE RECEPTIVE TO A UK LEAD. HE WAS VERY THIN ON ANY DETAILS OF WHAT UK RAPIER PROPOSAL CONTAINED HOW MANY BATTERIES WHETHER DEAL WAS COMPLETE AT THE QUOTED PRICE, ZOC.#

9. IF THERE IS ANY INTEREST IN WASHINGTON IN THIS TYPE APPROACH I COULD PASS THROUGH LONDON ON EVENING OF MAY 26/ MORNING MAY 27 TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 129158

ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON UK IDEAS WITH UK AND EMBASSY LONDON IN LIGHT OUR KNOWLEDGE OF KINGS INTERST. I COULD THEN BRING THESE BACK WITH ME AND BE IN TOUCH WITH DEPARTMENT ABOUT MAY 28 OR MAY 29.

10. BRITISH IDEAS ON TACTIS WERE POSSIBLY TO USE VISIT OF THEIR MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT HERE MAY 30-JUNE 2 TO SIGNAL TO KING THAT UK PRIME MINISTER WAS CONSIDERING NEW OPTION. UK ALSO HOPED TO USE SUBSEQUENT VISIT UK CHIEF AIR MARSHALL TO EXPLAIN PROPOSAL. HOWEVER HIS VISIT DATES FALL WHEN KING IS TO BE IN VIENNA AND MOSCOW AND IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO ADVANCE THE DATE. MOBERLY AND I DISCUSSED PROS AND CONS TELLING KING OF POSSIBLE PROPOSAL BEFORE OR FTER MOSCOW VISIT. IN GENERAL TELLING HIM JUST BEFORE MIGHT HELP HIM MOVE AWAY FROM OR RESIST SOVIET PRESSURES FOR A HARD DEAL ON ASSUMPTION THAT SOVIETS KNOW HE HAS NO FUNDS AND MIGHT PRESS HIM TOO HARD. DIFFICULTY WITH IT WAS THAT IT RAISED POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER ACTION BY KING WHICH SHOULD BE AVOIDED HOWEVER TIME IS SHORT

AND UK SEEMS ANXIOUS TO MOVE FAIRLY QUICKLY. ON BALANCE
IF OPTION HAS MERIT IT SHOULD PROBABLY BE BROACHED TO
KING BEFORE HE GOES TO MOSCOW TO STEADY HIS REACTION THERE
AND POSSIBLY PREVENT AN OVERCOMMITMENT TO SOVIETS ON
THE BASIS OF A WEAK GOJ POSITION.

11. WHILE CONSIDERED REACTION FROM DEPARTMENT
OBTAINING WILL TAKE TIME, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO
KNOW WHETHER THERE IS ANY INTEREST IN EXPLORING UK
IDEA FURTHER AND IF SO WHETHER THERE IS ANY VALUE IN
MY STOPPING OVER IN LONDON NIGHT MAY 24 PLEASE ADVISE.

12. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION
OF THIS UK LAST DITCH EFFORT IS REQUIRED. ON BALANCE
GIVING KING ANOTHER OPTION AT THIS POINT MIGHT
SWING DEAL AWAY FROM SOVIETS. UNKNOWN IS SAUDI
REACTION. HOWEVER IF UK BELIEVES IT CAN SWING
DEAL THERE ALSO AND IS WILLING TO TAKE LEAD IT WOULD
BE WORTH A TRY. I FEEL A FULL DEAL(DOLS 500 MILLION) WITH
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 129158

RAPIER AND HAWK HAS BETTER THAN EVEN CHANCE OF
SELLING HERE AND PULLING KING AWAY FROM SOVIETS BUT
WE MUST HAVE FULL SAUDI BACKING AND TURN HEAT ON KING
TO SELL IT.(HOWEVER IT WOULD COST MORE THAN HAWK/VULCAN IN LONG RUN)
GIVEN CONSEQUENCES OF SOVIET
DEAL I BELIEVE IT IS WORTH EXPLORING FURTHER IF UK
HAS ANY CONFIDENCE AT ALL IN MOVING SAUDI AHEAD. AS
YOU KNOW SAUDIS MIGHT STILL FIND RAPIER AN
"INTERESTING" ARRANGEMENT FOR THEM
TO FINANCE AND MIGHT JUST BE PREPARED TO PUT IN MONEY
FOR HAWK ALSO IF THEY KNEW IT WERE REQUIRED TO MAKE A
SENSIBLE PACKAGE AND PREEMPT SOVIETS.

13. DEPARTMENT REPEAT AS DESIRED.
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